



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CURRENT NOTES ON ANTHROPOLOGY (VIII.).

A SPELÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

OF course, everybody knows what spelæology means—or perhaps there are one or two who do not, considering that the word was manufactured only last year. Its sponsor was M. E. A. Martel, a French scientist distinguished for his numerous and skillful explorations of caves for scientific purposes. In Greek *Speleus* means a cave, and ‘spelæology’ is the science of cave-hunting, as it was called by the English. A society has been formed in Paris with that as a specialty, concerning which the curious inquirer can learn more if he addresses M. Martel, No. 8. Rue Menard.

The subject is one richly deserving this kind of concentrated and special study. No localities preserve more perfectly the records of the past than caverns. In their darkness and silence, guarded by their massive walls, layer after layer of deposits have been strown by their occasional visitors, by inundations and by percolation. A stalagmitic floor, clean, hard and imperishable, seals the traces of every occupant in perfect preservation through all time. Some of the most important discoveries in geology and archæology are due to these conditions. I need but mention the labors of Lartet, Christy, Boyd Dawkins, and in this country of Cope and Mercer, to attest this.

But nowhere is ignorant excavation more fatal than in cave-deposits. There is a high science in their examination; and M. Martel has planned an admirable scheme to disseminate valuable instruction on this essential point.

A VALUABLE STUDY IN PRIMITIVE ART.

A STUDY in primitive art of the most satisfactory character has been lately published by the Royal Irish Academy. It is entitled ‘The Decorative Art of British New Guinea: A Study in Papuan Ethnography,’ by Alfred C. Haddon, M. A., Professor of Zoölogy in

the Royal College of Science, Dublin. The author approaches his topic with an extensive personal knowledge of it, and a thorough appreciation of its bearings on the leading questions of ethnology in general. The memoir is in large quarto, with twelve full-page plates and many cuts inserted in the text. Some of the designs are colored, and all are copied with fidelity and clearness. Their variety is astonishing, considering that we are dealing with the art of cannibalistic savages, and the sense of proportion and harmony often manifested is just and real. The rapid development of conventionalism is evident, and even in such primitive examples one soon loses the traits of the original design. This has often been commented on in American aboriginal art.

Professor Haddon corrects the impression which sometimes prevails, that art decoration, for itself, is unknown to savages. Art is related to ease; as he says, ‘Art flourishes where food is abundant.’ Another vital conclusion he expresses in these words: “The same processes operate on the art of decoration, whatever the subject, wherever the country, whenever the age, illustrating the essential solidarity of mankind.” No truer words have been spoken on the subject, and ethnographers should learn them by heart.

In every respect the memoir is most creditable to the writer and to the institution which publishes it.

D. G. BRINTON.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

JAMES EDWARD OLIVER.

ON March 27th, 1895, after an illness of ten weeks, died Professor J. E. Oliver, of Cornell University, universally honored and beloved.

For more than twenty years he has been at the head of the department of mathematics in this great institution.